

A list of the “grossest stunts” on *Fear Factor* emphasizes those that involve ingestion and includes: a “pizza” of cow bile, coagulated blood paste, rancid cheese, topped with worms and fish eyes; buffalo testicles; large live spiders; cow eyeballs; horse rectum; worms; slugs.

Celebrity chef/writer Anthony Bourdain has sampled cuisines around the world on his cable TV shows *A Cook's Tour* (Food Network) and *No Reservations* (The Travel Channel). While presenting himself as a Romantic hero adventurer, Bourdain tempers the imperial visitor to the exotic Other by self-mocking his persona and genuinely appreciating his hosts in their own terms. In one episode he meets tribal people in Namibia and goes on a hunt that ends in eating warthog rectum. Always the adventurer, Bourdain tries it, but reports it was very repulsive. At the same time, he clearly respects the local hunters as valiantly pursuing self-sufficiency in the face of an incredibly hard life.

The point being that the cultural difference always exists along a line of power differential. That cannot be erased, even by “going native;” however recognizing power difference as present prevents obscuring the implications. Of course the difference can be held up for ridicule or dismissal of the Other rather than just a fact of cultural variety. Specific examples always have to be assessed along an axis ranging from cultural relativism to cultural elitism and racism. While food anthropologists might be considered the most progressive in this regard, food journalists can manage the issue as well. Andrew Zimmern, host of *Bizarre Foods* (Food Network) eats his way around the globe highlighting the most unusual local dishes (such as worms and insects) which he enthusiastically consumes on camera. The emphasis is on his delight at finding curious cuisine and consuming it with gusto, rather than the “yuck” factor of *Fear Factor*